

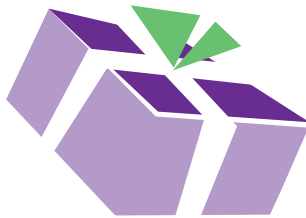


Here are a few simple tips to follow for a safe and happy holiday:

- If using an artificial tree, make sure the tree has a label that says it is “fire-resistant.”
- If using a real tree, buy a fresh tree because it will be less of a fire hazard than a dry tree.
- Place all trees away from fireplaces, radiators, and other heat sources.
- Place the tree out of the way of foot-traffic.
- Artificial snow sprays can irritate the lungs if inhaled. Please read all container labels and follow directions carefully.
- If you use indoor or outdoor lights, check the box to make sure that the lights have been tested for safety.
- Check each set of lights, new or old, for broken or cracked sockets, frayed or bare wires, or loose connections. Throw away damaged sets or repair them before using.
- Turn off all lights on trees and other decorations when you go to bed or leave the house.
- In homes with small children, pay special attention to avoid decorations that are sharp or breakable. Keep trimmings with small removable parts out of the reach of children and avoid trimmings that resemble candy or food because a child could swallow them.
- Keep matches, lighters, and candles out of the reach of children.
- Make and practice an emergency plan to use if a fire breaks out in the home.

Toys are a popular gift during the holidays. When buying children's toys, please follow these simple safety tips:

- Buy toys that suit your child's age, interest, and abilities.
- Look for the letters "ASTM", which show that the product meets the national safety standards set by the American Society for Testing and Materials.
- Look for safety labels like "Not recommended for children under 3 years of age," "non-toxic," and "washable/hygienic materials."
- Check toys regularly for damage and safety hazards such as sharp edges. Make necessary repairs immediately or throw away damaged toys.
- Toys are frequently recalled for safety reasons. Check the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission site, <http://www.cpsc.gov>, for updates and information on toy recalls.
- Always watch your children while they play.
- Teach your children to put toys away safely after playing. Safe storage prevents falls and other injuries.



For more information on how to keep your family safe this holiday season, please contact the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's Injury Prevention and Control Program at (617) 624-5070 or visit our website at <http://www.state.ma.us/dph/fch/injury/index.htm>